

CLAIMS

1. In a computer system having (i) a working memory in which application programs are executed, and (ii) an operating system including a file manager for managing files of application programs executed in the working memory, file and file image preview apparatus comprising:
- an extension coupled to the operating system in a manner such that the extension is entirely integrated with the operating system, the extension enabling user selection of a desired file and in response to user selection of the desired file, the extension enabling display of an indication of file characteristics of the desired file in a manner free of opening an application program in working memory and hence external to application programs in the working memory; and
- a display assembly responsive to the extension for displaying the indication of file characteristics of the user-selected desired file, in a manner free of opening an application program in working memory, such that a preview of the user-selected desired file is provided.
2. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the extension is coupled to the file manager of the operating system, such that the extension utilizes a user interface in common with the file manager to effectively provide full integration of the extension with the operating system.

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3. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the extension in response to user selection of a desired file further enables display of a working image from the file.
4. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the display of the working image is a reduced-in-size version of the working image.
5. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the indication of file characteristics include indications of at least one of height, width, length, color type, resolution, compression type used for storing and forming the file, and annotation graphics of the file.
6. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the file manager is a document manager for managing directories of files, and
the extension enables display of an indication of directory characteristics of a user-desired directory.
7. In a computer system having (i) an operating system and (ii) a working memory for executing application programs, file and file image previewing apparatus comprising:
a file manager coupled to the operating system, the file manager (a) managing files generated by application programs executed in the working memory and (b) enabling display of indicia of file characteristics of a user-selected file, said file manager being coupled to the operating system in a manner such that said display of

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indicia of file characteristics is generated outside of an application program opened and running in the working memory and hence external to application programs in the working memory; and a display assembly responsive to the file manager for displaying indicia of file characteristics of the user-selected file, outside of an application program opened and running in working memory, said display assembly thus providing a preview of the user-selected file.

8. A system as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the file manager in response to user selection of a desired file further enables display of a working image from the file.
9. A system as claimed in Claim 8 wherein the display of the working image is a reduced-in-size version of the working image.
10. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the indicia of file characteristics include indications of at least one of height, width, length, color type, resolution, compression type used for storing and forming the file, and annotation graphics of the file.
11. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the file manager includes a document manager for managing folders of files generated by application programs executed in the working memory, and enables display of indicia of folder characteristics of respective user-selected folders in a manner free

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of opening and running an application program in working memory, to provide respective preview of the user-selected folder.

12. In a computer system, a method of displaying file characteristics including images of a user-selected file, to provide a preview of the file, comprising the steps of:

providing a working memory for executing application programs;

executing application programs in said working memory in response to user command, said execution of the application program generating files of the computer system;

providing operating system means for enabling display of indications of file characteristics of a file selected by a user, the operating system means enabling display of file characteristics outside of an application program opened and running in the working memory; and

in a manner free of opening and running an application program in the working memory, displaying the indications of file characteristics of a user-selected file, in response to user command for previewing that file.

13. A method as claimed in Claim 12 further comprising the steps of:

through the operating system means, enabling display of a working image from the user selected file; and

displaying a working image with the indications of file characteristics of said file.

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14. A method as claimed in Claim 13 wherein the steps of enabling display of a working image and displaying the working image include reducing size of the working image to provide a minified rendition of the working image for previewing purposes.

15. A method as claimed in Claim 12 wherein the step of providing indications of file characteristics includes displaying indications of at least one of height, width, length, color type, resolution, compression type used for storing and forming the file, and annotation graphics of the file.

16. A method as claimed in Claim 12 wherein said step of displaying indications of file characteristics includes providing a display assembly responsive to the operating system means for displaying indications of file characteristics outside of an application program opened and running in working memory.

17. A method as claimed in Claim 12 wherein the step of providing operating system means includes at least one of:

providing a document manager in an operating system, the document manager for managing groupings of files, the document manager enabling display of indications of respective characteristics of user-selected groupings of the files, in a manner free of opening an application program in the working memory; and

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providing a file manager in an operating system, the file manager for managing files generated from application programs executed in the working memory, the file manager enabling display of indications of file characteristics of user-selected files, in a manner free of opening an application program in the working memory.

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